Other important architectural monuments have also been allowed to decay, and no useful record of them has been kept; while many valuable works of art have been broken up for the materials of which they are composed (we allude particularly to what we cannot but call the barbarisms of the utilitarian Lord W. Bentinck, at Agra), and coins and other articles of gold and silver that might, if preserved, have proved of inestimable value, have been thrown into the melting-pot, unnoticed and undescribed."

The known liberality of the Hon. the Court of Directors, and the fact that the Madras Government have, under their orders, deputed a qualified officer to examine the Cave Temples of the Dekkan, induce a hope that the Supreme Government will not receive with indifference the appeal the society have resolved on making. We would suggest that the two London Archæological Societies might aid in obtaining what the Delhi society very properly ask, by addressing a brief memorial to the Indian Government.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF LONDON.

SIR,—So little has been heard of late about the improvements of the British metropolis, that it seems as if they were destined to follow the fate of our commerce, trade, and railways, in a similar impolitic and panic-struck suspension. Speculation has been put down, and with it the most legitimate commerce, and yet there is plenty of wealth in England for all purposes; so that if the monied classes would rouse the sleepy faculties of their patriotism, the most noble plans of improvement might be carried out, and full employment afforded the people. With your permission I would beg to suggest, through the medium of "THE BUILDER," an improvement in one of our principal streets, and the opening of a new thoroughfare in another quarter of the town.

The first relates to Pall Mall. I hear it is reported that Mr. Pennethorne recommends the erection of a new National Gallery on the site of Cleveland-row, St. James's, and to raise the present building in Trafalgar-square a story, and make it fit for what it was originally intended, viz., the *atelier* of the Royal Academy of Painting. I do not pretend to be a competent judge of the eligibility of the proposed site for a National Gallery, but should the plan be adopted by Government, what I wish to recommend is, that the front of the new building should be set back so as to stand in a line with the north side of Pall Mall (which is really a fine-looking street with a very ill-looking western termination), and then make an opening into the Green-park, and remove the marble arch from Buckingham Palace to that site, which, I humbly think, would be a very appropriate one, in more respects than one, and afford a beautiful vista down the whole length of Pall Mall.

My second relates to the opening of a new thoroughfare, by forming a wide carriage-road in a straight line from near the west end of Old-street to the east end of Theobald's-road, *viâ* Liquorpond-street, the two termini of which, you will find on reference to a map of London, are exactly in a line. Should this plan involve the necessity of a viaduct over the valley, to which I can see no objection, two brick arches, at moderate cost, would be sufficient, and the rest of the hollow on each side might be filled up with earth. Much of the picturesqueness of Edinburgh is owing to its numerous viaducts.

No one can imagine, who does not reside in a north-east suburb as I do, how truly useful such a carriage thoroughfare would be, how round-about a drive it would save, and what an economising of time it would effect. Many a time I have been from one to two hours getting to High Holborn, having to stem the stoppages and shocks in the defile of Cheapside, the halts and "go-on's" in Newgate-street, and the falling of horses and breaking of legs at Holborn-hill; and what is almost as bad as witnessing the sufferings of these noble animals, is the provoking loss of time which you are compelled to bear, like poor Job, while being danced this long round to Holborn, at the same time that you know that an omnibus could do the distance in half an hour well, by a straight line of road, if it existed. The property that would be required for opening this line consists, with few exceptions, of very old small houses, and there are no public buildings in the way. This new thoroughfare is urgently required by a population of many thousands spread over West Hackney, Kingsland, Stoke Newington, and Beauvoir Town, &c. It was hoped that it would have been effected by some railway company or other, several years ago; but if the Government waits for that consummation, I fear it will wait in vain, for there is not the most distant probability of such an event.

A WILTSHIREMAN.

WANT OF HABITATIONS FOR THE WORKING CLASSES.

SIR,—The observations with which you prefaced your remarks on the "Lumsden Model Dwellings for the Working Classes," lately erected in Glasgow, are so much to the point, as regards our requirements for the people of England, that I almost deem any observations of mine superfluous, more especially when your correspondent's letter, signed "J. E. D.," is also considered. However, I trust you will permit me to make a few remarks on this all-important matter. Within the last few years much has been accomplished to remedy the sanitary condition of this metropolis and our large towns, both by the local and other authorities, yet much more remains to be done; and one of the principal considerations, next to a proper drainage, is the habitations of the middle and working classes of society. Government, by enactments and other measures, of course, can compel local boards to remedy the former, but not so the latter, which is entirely a matter of private enterprise and speculation. England, above all other nations, is proverbial for her industrious and speculative spirit, not to mention her advance in other respects; and when we come to consider her vast wealth, and the numerous ways in which it is invested in all parts of the globe, we cannot forbear exclaiming,—this is indeed a wonderful people!

But, in the midst of all this propagating industry, why is it that our monied men have hitherto never thought of investing a portion of their wealth in the erection of habitations for the working man? Surely this would be as safe a field for their capital as the Pennsylvanian funds, or the erection of splendid mansions and fancy dwellings for the noble and wealthy, which (if I may be allowed the expression) have sprung into existence within the last five years in this mighty city, and which at this moment are, I am sorry to say, but very partially inhabited. Many are still in the condition as left by the workmen, either more or less incomplete. There they stand, monuments of industry as far as regards rapidity of erection goes, but, on the other hand, sad spectacles of man's cupidity, want of foresight, and folly. The projectors, it would almost seem, were desirous that the rich man should be puzzled how to choose from amongst so many. I have no hesitation in saying, if the capital now lying dormant in empty houses had been applied in the erection of model dwellings for the middle and working classes, that the capitalist would be realising at this day a good per centage for his outlay, not to mention the unspeakable benefits he would have been conferring on his less fortunate brethren.

Perhaps, Sir, you may deem me somewhat tedious in thus adverting so fully to the man of money, but it is this individual class alone that we must look to for bettering the homes of our hard-working population: with them rests either to increase or decrease our bills of mortality. My wish, Sir, is, that they may be convinced that there is no risk attached to bringing about this happy change, for doubts on this head have hitherto been the great bugbear. I say this, not from mere theoretical deductions, but from my own personal knowledge and experience.

I have given this matter much consideration, and been induced—repeatedly induced—to call the attention of various parties to the safety of such an investment, and the great good which would arise from it: none for a moment have denied the existing necessities for such a change, but the invariable answer has been—I fear such a scheme would not pay; ground-rents are high and taxes equally so, not to mention the trouble incidental to the collecting the rents, &c. &c. Now, Sir, I think you will hold with me that this is very fallacious reasoning; the truth is (I fear) that it is one thing to project for a poor but honest man, and another for the rich, however questionable his integrity may be; I say this with all due respect, trusting not be misunderstood.

As regards the two first objects, ground-rents are certainly high in many parts of the metropolis, but plenty of sites are to be had on reasonable terms, and as the calculations are only for what the building covers, let there be a higher elevation, as in Edinburgh and Paris: to such an arrangement surely there can be no objections. Touching the taxes, of course they vary almost in every parish, but in some they are low; however, I beg to submit that even with taxes and altogether they would realize a good per centage. As to the trouble of collecting the rents, this objection requires no reply: I presume there exists no difficulty in appointing a person for that purpose if the owner or owners deem it necessary. As to the plans for such buildings, I find I have already trespassed so much that I will leave the subject for some future occasion. My present object being to draw the attention of the capitalist, which I trust, with your powerful aid, may result in much good, I feel assured, as far as you are concerned, that nothing will be wanting.

In 1844, the proprietors of the Docks and other public works at Birkenhead found it necessary to erect model dwellings for their workmen (the arrangements of which are excellent), and I believe they have answered exceedingly well; let, therefore, such as they and Mr. Lumsden do their duty in this respect, and I feel assured that associations will be formed, the shares of which will become good stock.

W. S.

THE VALUE AND POWER OF ART.

WE admire true art, on account of its ennobling tendency. It has its origin in principles which, founded in the constitution of our nature, are the foundation of excellence. It would not be a difficult, though a very interesting task, from the varied and honoured labours of the artist, to shew that success demands, on his part, the exercise of the highest mental faculties. Real art proclaims, with eloquence, its intrinsic dignity. How often, for instance, do the stately monuments which her genius have reared force themselves on our regard, rivetting our attention, and commanding our admiration, even when men are intently occupied in the bustling transactions and exciting pursuits of life! When the appeals of art are so powerful, it would be idle to say anything in vindication of its character, were it not that there are creatures upon whose minds they seem to make no impression, and who rudely pass them by, or only cast upon them a look of cold indifference. To write, however, on subjects of art, is to eulogise them, and is, at the same time, to give a history of the good they have effected; but this has been from time immemorial felt and acknowledged by all persons who have a claim upon us from their keen sensibility to beauty, and their lofty elevation of intellect. To the poet they have ever afforded a congenial and favourite theme,—to the wealthy, an opportunity of gratifying their own taste in encouraging talent; nor has posterity ever forgotten those artists whose services and beautiful emanations have thrown such a glory over their vocation, but have recorded their names on the roll of fame, as benefactors to their race.

There is no reader of that remarkable poem, the "Iliad," but must remember the frequent allusions which Homer makes to the works of the skilled Sidonian artists and cunning artificers; with what warm sympathy, but, at the same time, with what propriety, he introduces descriptions of various instruments of war—royal and sacerdotal vestments, curiously woven—the shield of the hero Achilles; with works of larger construction—architectural fabrics, such as in after ages were conceived by a Palladio

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